



The American Waterways Operators
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Lynn M. Muench
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January 22, 2010

Senator Susan Garrett
Chairperson
Environment Committee
Illinois Senate
129 Capitol Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Statement for the Record
on the Asian Carp Hearing

Dear Senator Garrett:

The American Waterways Operators (AWO) is the national trade association representing the inland and coastal tugboat, towboat and barge industry. Fifteen AWO members have headquarters in Illinois, and many others operate vessels that transit through the Lockport, Chicago and O'Brien Locks. We appreciate this opportunity to submit a statement on the subject of the hearing, a long-term approach to addressing Asian Carp in Illinois waterways.

Throughout the lifespan of the fish barrier in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal (CSSC), AWO and its member companies have worked with federal and state agencies, including the U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to prevent the introduction of invasive species to the Great Lakes while ensuring that critical goods still flow to and from the Chicago region on the waterways. We remain fully committed to this goal.

AWO shares the concerns of the Illinois Congressional delegation and the state Attorney General about recent actions by other Great Lakes state governments and their representatives in Congress to stop navigation in the Chicago region. Given the large environmental and economic benefits that barge transportation provide to the state of Illinois and the nation through reduced emissions and family-wage employment, we urge the Senate to work with its colleagues in the state's executive branch and the U.S. Congressional delegation to continue to prevent the efforts by other states to shut down waterborne commerce in the region.

AWO strongly supports several actions to stop the Asian carp from entering Lake Michigan, including:

- The expedited and immediate completion of the CSSC's third barrier, known as Barrier IIB, that will allow the safe movement of waterborne commerce while preventing the migration of Asian carp.
- The expedited and immediate completion of structures to guard against Carp entering the Lake when floods occur. This is an especially important action as floods were the vehicles that introduced the fish into the Mississippi River system.
- Finally, AWO encourages more scientific study about the potential of Carp to survive within the Great Lakes ecosystem, and if survival is believed to be possible, AWO urges continued study of ways to mitigate population growth.

Thank you for your attention to the perspective of navigation in this matter. We stand ready to continue the industry's collaboration with the state and other stakeholders as we all look for ways to protect both waterborne commerce and the environment. If you have any questions or would like any further information, please contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Lynn Muench

